



MAN ANSWERS OWN PRAYERS

Theosophist Explains How to Create "Army of Obedient Servants."

LIVING THINGS INVISIBLE

Once Grasped, They "Range the Astral World to His Pleasure."

By DR. W. W. BAKER.

The question is continually asked: "Do our Theosophists believe in prayer?" and it may be helpful to some to study the subject of prayer in the light of occult knowledge, prefacing the study with the remark that the belief of Theosophists will vary according to their knowledge, and that no Theosophist, save the writer, is committed to the statements that follow. The public does not yet realize that a Theosophist is not fitted with a ready-made suit of beliefs when he enters the society, but is only supplied with material from among which he may choose those which suit him, and must then proceed to fashion his garments for himself. The beliefs that are here submitted are given simply as the views of an individual student, as materials for study.

The first thing necessary in considering the utility of prayer is to analyze prayer itself, for the word is used to cover various activities of consciousness, and they cannot be dealt with as though they formed a simple whole. We find prayers are petitions for definite worldly advantages, for the supply of physical needs—prayers for food, clothing, money, employment, success in business, recovery from illness, etc. These will group together as class A. Then we have prayers for help in moral and intellectual difficulties and for spiritual growth—for the overcoming of temptations, for strength, for insight, for enlightenment. These can be grouped as class B. Lastly there are the prayers that ask for nothing, that consist in contemplation and adoration of the Divine Perfection, in intense aspiration for union with God—the ecstasy of the mystic, the meditation of the sage, the soaring rapture of the saint. These we will call class C.

Ladder of Humans.

The next thing that we must realize is the great ladder of living beings from the subhuman elemental to the Logos Himself, a ladder in which no rung is wanting.

This occult side of nature is a fact, not a dream. All the world is filled with living things invisible to fleshly eyes. The astral world interpenetrates the physical and crowds of intelligent-conscious creatures through "round us at every step. Some are below man in intelligence and some are above him. Some are easily influenced by his will, others are accessible to his requests. In addition to these independent entities, the elemental essence is responsive to his emotions and

his thoughts, and is swiftly shaped into forms whose very life is to carry out the feeling or the thought that ensouls them; thus he can create at will an army of obedient servants who range the astral world to do his pleasure.

Yet again there are available human, though invisible helpers, whose attentive ear may catch a cry for aid, and who gladly serve as veritable "ministering angels" to the soul in need. And to crown all there is the ever-present, ever-conscious life of the Logos Himself, potent and responsive at every point in His realm, of Him without whose knowledge not a sparrow falleth to the ground, not a dumb creature trills in joy or pain, not a child laughs or sobs—that all-pervading, all-embracing, all-sustaining life and love in which all live and move. As thought that can give pleasure or pain can touch the human body without the sensory nerves carrying the message of its impact to the brain centers, and as there thrills down from them, and that through the motor nerves the answer that well-comes or withdraws, so does every vibration in the universe, which is His body, reach His consciousness and draw there responsive action.

Feeling and Motion.

Nerve-cells, nerve-threads, and muscular fiber may be the agents of feeling and motion, but it is the man that feels and acts; so may myriad of intelligences be the agents, but it is the Logos that knows and answers. Nothing can be so small as not to affect that delicate omnipresent consciousness, nothing so vast as to transcend it. We are so limited that the very idea of space and confounds us; yet perhaps, the great might be as hard bested if he tried to measure the consciousness of Pythagoras. It is impossible to deny the fact that prayers are answered, and that many can give out of their own experience clear and decisive cases of "answers to prayer." Moreover many of these do not refer to what are termed subjective experiences, but to hard facts of the so-called objective world. A man has prayed for money and the post has brought him the needed amount; a woman has prayed for food, and food has arrived at her door. In connection with charitable and undertakings, there is plenty of evidence of help prayed for in direct need, and of speedy and liberal response. On the other hand, there is also plenty of evidence of prayers left unanswered, of the hungry starving to death, of the child snatched from its mother's arms by death, despite the most passionate appeal to God. Any reasonable view of prayer must take into consideration these conflicting facts; must neither refuse to admit the answers nor evade the recognition of the failures to obtain any. All facts must fall into their place in any true theory of prayer.

We will take separately our three classes of prayers, and we shall find that the occult lives in nature are the agents which bring about answers to prayer, the particular agents at work being those suitable to the kind of prayer put forth.

Several Agencies.

When a man utters a prayer of class A, he may obtain an answer through one of several agencies. His concentrated thought and earnest desire will affect the elemental essence of the astral plane, and he creates a powerful artificial elemental, whose one idea is to bring about what its creator desires. This elemental, where the prayer is for money, food, clothing, employment, for anything that can be given by one man to another, will seek out a person able to give, and will impress on that person's

brain the image of its creator and of his special need, this impression giving rise to the thought of sending the man help. Prayer is the motor power, the artificial elemental is the agent concerned in bringing about the desired result, and a cheque, unasked for by man on the physical plane, comes as the answer to prayer.

The result could have been obtained as readily by a deliberate effort of the will, without any prayer, by a person who understood the mechanism concerned and the way to put it into motion. But in the case of most people, ignorant of the forces of the invisible world and unaccustomed to exercise their wills, the concentration of the mind and the earnest desire necessary for success are far more easily reached by prayer than by a deliberate mental effort to put forth their own strength. They would doubt their own power, even if they understood the theory, and doubt is fatal in all service of the will. That the person who prays does not understand the machinery he sets going in no wise affects the result; a child who stretches out his hand and grasps an object need not understand anything of the working of the exterior muscles, nor of the chemical and electrical changes set up by his movement in muscles and nerves.

Child's Strong Will.

He wills to take hold of the thing he wants, and the various parts of his body obey his will although he does not even know of their existence. So also it is with the man who prays, unknowing of the creative force of his thought or of the proceedings of the creature he has sent forth to do his bidding; he acts as unconsciously as the child, and, like the child, grasps what he wants.

A prayer of class A may also be answered in other ways than by the action of an artificial elemental. A passing disciple or other helper at work on the astral plane, may hear the prayer and bring about the desired result. Especially is this likely to be the case when the utterer of the prayer is a philanthropist in need of aid for the carrying on of some beneficent work. The helper will throw the thought of sending him the assistance he needs into the fertile soil of a charitable brain and the result will follow as before.

The failure of earnest and strongly willed prayers to bring about the object aimed at seems to be due to the fact that they dash themselves against some karmic cause too strong for them to turn aside or to modify to any appreciable extent. A man condemned by starvation may hurl his prayers against that destiny in vain. The artificial elemental he has created by such prayers will find all its efforts futile; no helper will come in his way to cause the desired relief to be sent to him.

Prayer Won't Help.

When the relation that had existed in the past between the souls of parents and of a dying child necessitate in the present life the breaking of the tie at a particular period, the current of force set free by the prayer will not avail to prolong the thread of the young life. Here, as everywhere, we are living in a realm of law, and forces may be modified or entirely frustrated by the play of other forces with which they come in contact. The exactly similar forces might be applied to set in motion two exactly similar balls; but in one case no other force might be applied to the ball and it might fly to the mark aimed at, the other a second force might strike the ball and send it entirely out of its course. And so with two similar prayers;

one may be karmically unopposed, or even aided on its way by a karmic force, while the second may be flung aside by a karmic force far more energetic than the original impulse. One prayer is answered, the other fails to the ground apparently unheeded; in both cases the result follows the law.

Let us consider class B. Prayers for help in moral and intellectual difficulties are efficacious both in action and reaction. They draw the attention of those servants of humanity who are everseeking to help the bewildered soul, and, as this "God-with-us" imparts to the mind and heart the energy of the spiritual nature, making us conscious of our own divine power.

Subjective Answer.

But there is also a subjective answer, not so readily recognized, as a rule, by those who pray, that may be regarded as the reaction of the prayer itself on the one who offers it. His prayer truly awakens his higher, lower nature, and places his heart and mind in the receptive attitude, which makes it easy to open the channel of communication between his higher, lower nature, and thus allows the strength and illuminative power of the higher to pour downwards into the brain-consciousness.

The currents of energy which normally flow downwards, or outwards, from the inner man as a rule directed to the external world, are and are utilized in the ordinary affairs of life by the brain-consciousness for the carrying on of its daily activities. But when this brain-consciousness turns away from the outer world, and, shutting its outward-going doors, directs its gaze inward; when it deliberately opens itself to the inner and closes itself to the outer; then it becomes a vessel able to receive and to hold instead of a mere conduit pipe between the interior and exterior worlds. In the silence obtained by the cessation of the noises of external activities, the quiet voice of the soul can make itself heard, and the concentrated attention of the expectant mind enables it to catch the soft whisper from the inner self.

Even more markedly is this the case when the prayer is for spiritual enlightenment, for spiritual growth. Not only do all helpers most eagerly seek to forward spiritual progress, seizing on every opportunity offered by the upward-aspiring heart, but the longing for such growth liberates energy of a higher kind, the spiritual longing calling forth an answer from the spiritual realm. Once more the law of sympathetic vibrations asserts itself, and the note of lofty aspiration is answered by a note of its own order, by a vibration synchronous with itself.

Life Floods Soul.

The divine life is ever pressing against the limits which bind it, and when the upward-rising force strikes against those limits the separating wall is broken through, and the life floods the soul. When a man, becoming strong in spiritual aspiration, no longer seeks for gain nor looks to God for aid; when his sole longing is to resemble that which he adores, and prayer becomes an act of contemplation and worship; then the result of the prayer is to draw an answer from the high

spiritual region to which the thought of the suppliant aspires. The subtle vibrations of the spiritual realm play on the up-reaching soul, awakening the corresponding divine elements that lie latent within it, and these, thrilling into answer, flood the man with a new sense of power and make him realize something of the nature of divinity. Inasmuch as the Divine is everywhere, as to Him we live and move, that appeal to the Divine without us causes an activity which reacts on us, awakening the Divine within us, and this "God-with-us" imparts to the mind and heart the energy of the spiritual nature, making us conscious of our own divine power.

Thus we pass from the spiritual aspirations almost imperceptible into the prayer which is pure worship, pure adoration, from which all petition is absent, and which seeks only to pour itself forth in sheer love of the perfect, dimly sensed, Supreme. Such prayers, grouped as class C, are the means of union between man and God, drawing the worshipper into the being he adores. In these, the consciousness limited by the senses contemplates in mute ecstasy the image it creates of Him whom it knows to be in truth beyond all imagining, and oft, rapt by the intensity of its love beyond the limits imposed by the intellect, it soars upward into the realm where limits are not, and feels and knows far more than on its return it can tell in words or clothe in intellectual form.

Prayer Is Heard.

Then in prayer the mystic gazes on the Beatific Vision, then the sage rests in the infinite calm of the wisdom that is beyond knowledge, then the saint is penetrated with the radiant purity in which God is seen. Such prayer irradiates the worshipper and from the mount of such high communion descending to the plains of earth, the very face of flesh shines with supernatural glory, translucent to the flames which burn within. Happy they who know the reality which no words may convey to those who know it not; those whose eyes have seen the King in His beauty will remember, and they will understand.

Next week the subject will be "The Atonement."

WOMEN "DEMOCRATS" MEET.

Women's League Hears Report of Mrs. William A. Cullop.

The executive board meeting of the Women's National Democratic League held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, at Congress Hall Hotel, the president, Mrs. William A. Cullop, presiding. Mrs. Cullop, as treasurer of the entertainment committee, turned over to the national treasurer a handsome sum as net proceeds from the Martha Jefferson breakfast recently given at Rauscher's for the benefit of the league. Mrs. F. B. Moran, chairman of the entertainment committee, gave a report in which regret was expressed that the continued indisposition of Mrs. Wilson and the absence from Washington of Mrs. Thomas R. Marshall, respectively, honor-ary president and honorary vice president of the league, prevented their attendance at the breakfast. Mrs. Thomas S. Tallaferra, State vice-president of the league for Wyoming, gave an interesting account of her work in the West. Mrs. William Kettner, wife of Representative Kettner, of California, who appointed national recording secretary to succeed Mrs. Leonard Hoffman, resigned.

IDEALISTS PLAN NATIONS' CAPITAL

World Conscience Society Is to Launch \$100,000,000 Scheme.

DREAM OF TEN YEARS

Hendrik Christian Anderson Designs International City to Be Home of All Activities.

A grandly idealistic project has recently been launched by an international organization known as the "World Conscience Society." The details and plans were conceived and perfected after ten years of altruistic labor and study on the part of Hendrik Christian Anderson, an American-Scandinavian sculptor residing in Rome, assisted by some forty sculptors, artists, engineers, architects, and scientists, and has for its object the establishment of an ideal world city where all international activities are to have their home and inspiration.

A City Without Stains.

A review of the massive and beautifully illustrated volume which embodies the plan in its details was recently published in the monthly bulletin of the Pan-American Union. "This proposed international city," writes the reviewer, "is to be a city of light, health, wide avenues, parks, playgrounds, fountains, lagoons, and noble buildings. It is to be a city without slums, a city of efficiency, convenience and beauty. Not only in structure, plan, and equipment will it be the ideal city, but it is intended to become the intellectual, artistic, and practical international capital of the world; a clearing-house for the various social, cultural, scientific and political aspirations of humanity."

As designed it will cover some ten square miles of ground. Its architectural plans are so drawn that it can be built at almost any spot accessible to the sea where there is ample room within the limits of the city for the homes of the permanent inhabitants and the necessary business and manufacturing plants, the heart of the city is composed of buildings adapted to the unification of international interests.

These are grouped into three centers devoted respectively to science, art, and physical culture. The scientific center is connected with the center of art by the broad Avenue of Nations, flanked on either side by paces which will house ambassadors and delegates representing their respective nations. It has for its crowning motif the gigantic Tower of Progress, which rises to the height of 1,000 feet or more. On the summit of this tower will be installed a wireless telegraph plant and on the lower floor of its colossal base will be found a world printing press.

Other Dream Features.

"The tower rises in the midst of a

circular space set apart for international congress buildings for medicine, surgery, hygiene, law and criminology, electricity and invention, agriculture and transportation, all of which are provided with halls, libraries, museums and accessory offices. To the northeast is the International Hall of Justice and to the southwest the Temple of Religions. Completing the conception stand an international bank or clearing-house and a world reference library, while in gardens nearby are found the international institutes of higher learning. The center is connected with the physical culture center by means of gardens devoted to horticulture, natural history, zoology and botany. An imposing Temple of Art, forming the chief monument of this center, has been planned with spacious halls and galleries for sculpture and painting, surrounding a vast auditorium.

"The physical center is intended to facilitate a world reunion of athleticism and to promote the scientific development of the human form in all nations. A vast stadium is its central feature. Near it is a large natatorium, gymnasium for men and women, and open fields and athletic quadrangles for international exhibitions and contests."

The estimated cost of creating such a city, according to the author of the plan, would not be over \$100,000,000, a sum that would not severely tax the resources of the governments of the world if equitably distributed. The international committee of the organization is to determine the site and location of the city at its meeting next year. Numerous places have been mentioned, such as the Dutch coast near The Hague; the Riviera, near Cannes; Turin, near Brusa; St. Germain on Lake, near Paris; the Marmora coast, near Constantinople; the New Jersey coast, near Lakewood; the isthmus of Panama, and recently the island of Cuba.

Many leaders in art, science, education and world politics in the various countries of the civilized globe are taking an active interest in the movement, and the meeting of the international committee next year will create a world-wide interest.

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